

All Around Pennsauken



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VOL. 27, NO. 2

A Publication for the Community of Pennsauken

February 2022

COVID-19 Vaccines, Booster Shots Available On February 26

Mayor Jessica Rafeh and the members of Township Committee are excited to announce that Pennsauken has partnered with the New Jersey Department of Health to provide residents easy access to COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots this month. A mobile vaccination event will be held on Saturday, Feb. 26, from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Pennsauken Township Municipal Court Building, 2400 Bethel Ave. This event is free, and no appointment is necessary.



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Pennsauken Township Appoints New Animal Control Officer



The staff of New Jersey Animal Control has been hired by Pennsauken's municipal government to be the Township's new animal control officer.

By Frank Sinatra, AAP Editor

For 2022, Pennsauken Township and its residents are being served by a new animal control officer. New Jersey Animal Control (NJAC) of Medford has been in

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Township Committee Holds 2022 Reorganization, Makes History

By Frank Sinatra, AAP Editor

History was made during the 2022 reorganization meeting of Pennsauken Township Committee on Jan. 6. During the evening's proceedings, Jessica Rafeh was sworn in as the town's first Hispanic and Middle Eastern mayor; Nicole Roberts became the town's first African American female deputy mayor; and the pair represent the first time Pennsauken will have an all-female led governing body.

"Today we're making history in Pennsauken, and I'm humbled and honored to be a part of it," said Mayor Rafeh during her remarks. "To my fellow Committee members, thank you for the opportunity and the trust you have embedded in me. To all the former mayors who have stood here before me, thank you for leadership. You have all worked very, very hard for the betterment of Pennsauken and I hope that



Deputy Mayor Nikki Roberts and Mayor Jessica Rafeh were sworn into office during Pennsauken Township Committee's reorganization meeting on Jan. 6.

I can continue to follow in your footsteps."

"I am truly humbled and honored to stand here before you this evening with another opportunity to serve this incredible town, this time as deputy mayor. I am

grateful and appreciate your trust in me and I look forward to the opportunity to serve with our new mayor, Jessica Rafeh, and the rest of Committee," added

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AARP Tax-Aide Services Available At Pennsauken Library



tax documents collected. These meetings, available by appointment only, will take place in the Pennsauken Free Public Library's Community Room on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Before the taxpayer leaves, they will make a follow-up appointment to return the same day to review the printed tax return, sign an authorization for AARP Foundation to file the return electronically, and acknowledge their receipt of the original tax documents.

PLEASE NOTE: The Pennsauken Free Public Library requires all visitors over the

age of 2 who enter to wear a mask covering both the nose and mouth, and to maintain social distancing. Visitors are encouraged to limit their time in the building to one hour or less.

Taxpayers can only make appointments by accessing the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Site Locator at: www.aarpfoundation.org/Tax-Aide or accessing the appointment form directly at <http://bit.ly/2uUt19D> Tax-Aide. Taxpayers will receive an automatic confirmation email. A follow-up email from aarp.cc.pt@gmail.com will include the links to documents to be printed, completed, and brought to the drop-off site. If you do not have a printer, packets

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Same Day Drop Off

Taxpayers interact with an IRS-certified Tax-Aide in a 20-30 minute in-person and socially distanced meeting. During the appointment, the Tax-Aide will complete the intake process and write a receipt for all

Look! inside

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New Jersey American Water: (800) 272-1325

Pennsauken Environmental Commission Announces 2022 Meeting Schedule

The mission of the Pennsauken Environmental Commission is to promote the public interest in natural resource protection, reclamation, and sustainable development. The Commission wants to help educate the public and involve our community in events or programs we may have throughout the year.

Meetings are generally scheduled at 7:00 p.m. for the third Monday of each month (the second or fourth Monday if there is a Holiday conflict). There is no meeting scheduled for December. Meetings are currently held via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The public is invited to attend these meetings

- Feb. 28
- March 21
- April 18
- May 16
- June 20
- July 18
- Aug. 15
- Sept. 19
- Oct. 17
- Nov. 21

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/PennsaukenEnviroComm.



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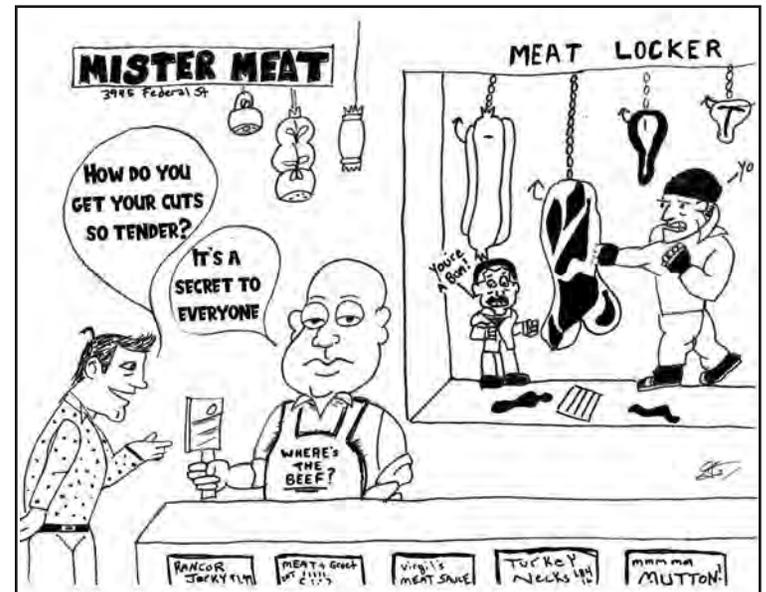
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For editorial submissions contact
Frank Sinatra, Editor
856-665-1000 x 127
aap@twp.pennsauken.nj.us

For advertising contact
Mario Daulerio, Publisher
856-662-5100 • allaroundpenn@aol.com
PO Box 595 • Pennsauken, NJ 08110

CORNER MAYOR'S Ready For A Year Of Challenges And Opportunities



By Jessica Rafah,
Mayor of
Pennsauken
Township

Let me once again say how truly honored I am to not only be the mayor of the great town of Pennsauken, but also to be a part of history. As an immigrant to this amazing country, a welcomed transplant to this community, and as a woman respected and trusted by my peers on Township Committee, this moment is not lost on me. This is more than just a journey of growth, whether it is for Pennsauken or for me. It is an opportunity to showcase the proud diversity of our town and to inspire others.

Pennsauken is an example of the American Dream in South Jersey. There are people from all walks of life and many different cultures. They all call this special place their home. It was true when my family moved here when I was a little girl, and it is even more true today. It doesn't matter where you come from. Whether it's from Camden or Cherry Hill, Trenton or Philadelphia, Venezuela or Vietnam, this community welcomes you with open arms. That spirit of acceptance is more important now than ever.

It is one of my goals as mayor to celebrate this more; Township Committee will be working with our Parks and Recreation coordinator to showcase this strength of our community in some of our upcoming public events. Throughout the year, we have some great opportunities for our families and our neighbors to come together and celebrate who we are as a Township. Sharing our different cultures will make these events even more special.

Last month, both Deputy Mayor Roberts and I were honored to be recognized by the Camden County Commissioners with proclamations. It is the first time that Pennsauken has a Hispanic and Middle Eastern mayor, a female African American deputy mayor, and two women serving in leadership roles in our community. While this was a truly special moment for Nikki and myself, it

really wasn't for us. It's more for those who will come after. It is so important to inspire the next generation of community leaders. There are young people who feel that because they are different, whether they don't look like everyone else or talk with an accent, that their voices don't matter. That could not be farther from the truth. It more than matters. You don't only need to be heard. You need to be leaders. I hope that what I do as mayor this year does more than make our residents proud. It is my dream to inspire our young people to believe in themselves, to reach for the stars, and to not just live in our community, but be an active part in its growth and success. I en-

courage you to learn what's going on in our town, share your concerns with us, and find ways to volunteer and give back. By doing so, you will find out that you are more than what you thought, and capable of so much more than you believed.

After our reorganization meeting in January, we have gotten right to work. I have been in more meetings the past few weeks than I have ever thought possible. But it is a joy to serve the great people of Pennsauken. Please know that every member of Pennsauken Township Committee is dedicated to building up our community and showcasing what makes our town special. It is my hope that our residents – our families and our neigh-

bors – come and join us in this important effort. We want to hear from you. Tell us what we're doing right. Absolutely tell us

what we need to correct. And come be a part of our mission to make Pennsauken the best town in New Jersey.



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WAGSWORLD Sick And Tired Of Phone Scams Targeting Seniors

By Bob Wagner,
AAP Columnist

I received the good news phone call just an hour ago. The bride and I hit it big with Publishers Clearing House! Two and a half million to be exact. Not too shabby to start the new year. Now, before you reach for that phone to remind me that

I owe you money, realize I don't actually have the dough yet.

It seems that to collect, I have to call someone at Publishers and perhaps give them some information. Or maybe send them some money or give them my banking numbers. I don't know exactly, as I have refrained from calling back. Instead, as a true curmudgeon, I believe

this falls into the SCAM section of life.

I have been annoyed for ages over crooks who steal from people, especially old people. I am an old people. But as a skeptical old people, I just get mad as hell, instead of scammed.

So, I called Verizon and asked for the fraud division. After three transfers and artificial voices, I got a real person. I spoke to Joanna from Verizon, who explained, in circles, how I could avoid certain calls, and how I could set it all up by going on my computer, getting new pins, and doing what amounts to self-check-out. I don't want that. I want the people who sell lines and charge for my phone, and yours, to go catch the crooks.

Joanna said they don't do that. Only if you fall for the scam, send money or info, and get burned, does anyone help.

So, I called the cops. Actually, the county system gave me a non-emergency number in Pennsauken, and a wrong extension. After a bit of listening, I found information and spoke to a young man who told me pretty much the same story. No local, county, state, or fed-

eral agency is chasing crooks on the phone. Only, that is, if you fall prey to a scam and send money. No harm, no foul!

If I go up to someone on the street and say, give me your money, it is only a crime if they actually give up the cash? No harm, no crime.

Still miffed, I am checking to see if the post office still has a fraud agent. They used to be deadly serious about mail crime.

The young man at the info desk in Pennsauken asked if I had already called today. Not me, I said. First time caller and all. So, someone else is interested also. Maybe more than two. With all the laws and rules we deal with daily, you might think someone could be pissed enough to chase down these annoying thieves and protect our gullible public citizens.

The phone company was once a beloved utility that keeps us all connected. We could call home, get wake ups, cram into phone booths in the rain, and even feel like a princess with our own princess phone.

Not so much now. We take pictures of

checks without going to the bank. And we can take pictures and send them to the world on Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter. But we can't stop crooks or protect grammy and gramps. This sucks!

PENNSAUKEN FEBRUARY PUBLIC MEETINGS

In-person public meetings are held on the second floor of the Pennsauken Municipal Building 5605 N. Crescent Blvd. (At the corner of Rt. 130 and Merchantville Ave.)

Virtual meetings are held via Zoom. Log in information available at <https://www.twp.pennsauken.nj.us>.

Township Committee
(In Person)
6:00 p.m. Thurs.,
Feb. 3 and 17

Zoning Board of Adjustment
(Virtual)
7:00 p.m. Wed.,
Feb. 2, 9 and 16

Planning Board (Virtual)
6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 1 and 22

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New Owner Of Collex Collision Experts Found From Within

By Frank Sinatra, AAP Editor

For almost a quarter century, Leo Bashir has treated his customers at Collex Collision Experts in Pennsauken like family. Now Pete Badalamenti, a longtime member of his staff, will be continuing the tradition.

“Pete has shown right from the beginning that he was a hard worker. He’s always taken the initiative above and beyond what’s been asked of him,” explained Bashir, who brought Badalamenti in through a high school co-op program. “When Pete started, he said he

only knew how to make pizzas. I thought he was joking, but it was pretty accurate. Now, he’s teaching me.”

“Leo has been like a second father to me,” said Badalamenti, who started with Collex in 2005. “I’ve been given an opportunity to own a business doing something I love.”

Bashir will miss his customers but is

more than confident that the business is in good hands.

“I’ll miss the customers and talking with them, but it’s time to go,” said Bashir. “People have been asking, ‘Is Pete going to be as good as you?’ He’s going to be better.”

“I’m excited for this next step,” added Badalamenti. “I’m looking forward to

servicing our customers with superior service, building the business, and being more involved with the Pennsauken community.”

Collex Collision Experts is located at 7205 Maple Ave., in Pennsauken. For more information, visit CollexCares2.com or call (856) 665-1589.



Pete Badalamenti, seen here with Jomy and Leo Bashir, is taking over as the new owner of Collex Collision Experts in Pennsauken.

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By Joe Scavuzzo, Director,
Department of Public Works

I'd like to begin this article by acknowledging the well-deserved retirement of a 34+ year veteran of the Public Works team, Mr. John Stone. During his time here, John rose through the ranks, becoming the senior parks repairer and crew leader responsible for the upkeep of our many parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields. To offer an interesting piece of information about John that I only learned recently, he was one of the Township representatives who was involved with bringing the steel beam from the World Trade Center to Pennsauken that is now part of the 9/11 Memorial at Mer-

Winter Operations Continue At Department Of Public Works

chantville Ave. and Rt. 130. One can understand the pride John has for his country and his hometown through his service over the course of his career. We wish John well in this new chapter and future endeavors. Go Flyers!

Recycling Contamination

Our red-tagging efforts have been paying off immensely, as Pennsauken's recycling contamination is at an all-time low. We will continue checking recycling buckets in 2022 for bagged recycling and other non-recyclable items being placed in the yellow recycling bucket. The main culprit is still plastic bags, which leads me into a new law that will impact shoppers.

New Jersey Bag Ban

Effective May 4, 2022, single-use plastic and paper bags will be prohibited in New Jersey. Speaking generally, the law prohibits all stores, food-related businesses, and grocery stores from providing or selling these bags. For more information, visit BagUpNJ.com. The key term here is "single-use," when referring to those bags that are banned, opposite of certain plastic and paper bags that are reusable. This will surely come as a shock to those not familiar with the new law, but the impact on the Department of Public Works' litter fight will be great. With bare trees and brush lines in our parks and roadsides, a wind-blown plastic bag caught in a tree branch is unsightly.

Snow Plowing In The Township

I would like to offer a couple suggestions for the remaining weeks of winter that can make life easier during our snow plowing operations.

1.) By placing vehicles in your driveway (where possible) before snowfall begins, our crews can open each street "curb-to-curb," as they are instructed. This avoids stretches of street not being plowed as our dump trucks cannot maneuver between two parked vehicles.

2.) If you choose to shovel your driveway apron before we plow your street, place the snow on the left side of your driveway. This would reduce the amount of snow that a plow could grab from the street and push back into your driveway apron.

3.) When shoveling, place snow on your front lawn and not in the street. There is much more area for snow disposal on the lawn than the grass curb strip area where the street snow will need to end up.

4.) Heavy, wet snow is dangerous! Only shovel a small amount at a time to prevent back injuries. Our drivers take the same approach when plowing our streets.

2022 County Hazardous Waste Collection Events

As of this writing, Camden County has not set the 2022 Household Hazardous Waste Collections, nor the Electronics Recycling Events. When these dates are established, I will include them in future articles. For these electronics, including tube TVs, you can drop them off at Magnum Computer Recycling, here in Pennsauken. They are located at 5070 Central Hwy., off of Browning Rd. by Cooper River. You cannot place household hazardous waste and electronics at the curb for collection. Additionally, you cannot deliver these items to our complex.

Dealing With Pothole Season

This is the heart of pothole season, and we rely heavily on residents and the general public for information on pothole locations. We welcome a phone call or email to our office and will respond after prioritizing safety issues first. Remember, potholes found on county roads or state highways can be reported online to Camden County or NJ State DOT.

Stay safe, stay warm and contact our office at (856) 663-0178, publicworks@twp.pennsauken.nj.us or Facebook at "Pennsauken Twp. Dept. of Public Works"

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TALKIN' TRASH

Trash and recycling collection, as well as yard waste and white goods pick up, remain on a regular schedule for the month of February, weather permitting. There are no special hazardous waste or electronics recycling events scheduled this month.



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EDITOR'S**DESK**

The Battle Of The Bed: How Much Space Is Really Left?

By Frank Sinatra,
AAP Editor

I love my wife. I love my dog. I love my bed. But when you combine the three, it doesn't always work out.

We are those type of people who let our dog sleep in bed with us. It's great, until Loverboy – who received that name from the shelter because of the heart-shaped spot on his side and his affinity for kissing people to death – decides that he wants to climb up on top of us and live there forever. If this dog could get any closer, he'd be crawling up inside of us. Think reverse Tauntaun from "Empire Strikes Back." It's not horrible, particularly in the winter, when he's like another

fuzzy blanket. But when it gets warmer and you produce the heat of a blast furnace on your own like I do, it's not ideal.

Then there's my wife and her Medieval citadel of pillows. It even has its own portcullis. I'm glad that she's comfortable, but after almost 20 years of marriage, I have yet to get used to sleeping with 15 thousand cloth bags filled with down feathers. Who knew you needed more than one? Not me.

Here's how it goes. Between the dog that wants to live inside my body and a pillow fort the size of Cleveland, I have to muscle my way into a queen-sized bed, occasionally picking up and physically moving the dog and throwing several pillows out of my way, only to have

a half dozen more tumble on top of me. After finally getting comfortable, I am faced with the realization that I have secured about one sixteenth of the real estate on the mattress. That's until the dog moves his legs, or my wife shifts over, turning the pillows into a fluffy, makeshift bulldozer. I awake, precariously balanced on the edge of the bed, one sneeze away from falling to the floor. Talk about a cliff hanger. Maybe I should use all those extra pillows and put them on the floor to soften my landing?

So why do I torture myself? Isn't the definition of insanity doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different result? After much careful reflection, I know that deep down, my occasional nights of semi-exhausting sleep deprivation can be leveraged to take more naps, where I can commandeer at least three fourths of the bed all for myself, equipped with my single pillow, puppy notwithstanding. Now that's something worth falling off the bed for.

The struggle is real, folks. Be sure to get your eight hours in.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

South Jersey's First New Year's Baby From Pennsauken

The first baby of 2022 in the South Jersey region outside of Philadelphia was born at Jefferson Washington Township Hospital at 12:58 a.m. on Jan. 1.

Caden Nguyen Tran – weighing in at 8 pounds, 5 ounces and 20.5 inches long – was born to Linda Nguyen and husband, Vankiet Tran, of Pennsauken. The couple also has a three-year-old daughter, Sofia.

Linda Nguyen is a medical-surgical nurse at the Jefferson New Jersey hospital where she gave birth to little Caden. She thanked her delivering OB/GYN, Kelly Park, DO; nurse midwife, Jennifer Barraclough, CNM; and Labor & Delivery nurses Brighth Abreu, Alena Peterson and Colease Gamble.

“I want to share my appreciation for the awesome doctors, nurses and residents who made this experience so wonderful,” Linda Nguyen said.



Caden Nguyen Tran, born to Linda Nguyen and Vankiet Tran of Pennsauken, was the first baby of 2022 in the South Jersey region.

By Frank Sinatra, AAP Editor

The new year has brought a variety of changes to Pennsauken Township, with plenty of new faces in the offices at 5605 N. Crescent Blvd. In the Finance Department, you'll find both Elizabeth Peddicord, the town's new chief financial officer, as well as Rochelle Irvin, the new payroll clerk.

“Both Liz and Rochelle bring a wealth of experience to Pennsauken Township's municipal team,” said Tim Killion, Pennsauken's administrator. “We're excited to have them both on board.”

Peddicord has over 13 years of local government experience, previously working for Evesham and Hamilton Townships. Additionally, she holds various professional certifications, including certified municipal finance officer, certified tax collector, qualified purchasing agent, and certified public accountant.

“The experience I had rising through the ranks, particularly at Evesham, has helped me realize how pivotal all the moving parts are in municipal government,” explained

Peddicord. “It's key to have good relationships with every single department and you have to be on the same page at the end of the day. Pennsauken reminds me a lot of Evesham. Just walking in here, I just knew it was going to be a good fit.”

Irvin has over two decades of payroll experience, previously working at the Pennsauken School District for the last 7 years. She has worked with multiple different payroll systems and has extensive experience handling pensions, unemployment, balancing and processing payroll, and worker's compensation.

“Even though things are handled differently here than at the District, the experience I have made it easier to navigate it and learn the payroll aspect,” said Irvin, who has lived in town since 2004. “I'm making good relationships with the team here, which helps.”

The Finance Department is hard at work to transfer manual procedures to digital processes, so that Township employees can access paystubs and tax documents online and residents can make

payments via credit card over the web.

“There's a lot of potential here to build upon what's already in place,” said Peddicord. “Creating more online processes will go a long way to help our employees and Township residents.”

“I like the fact that I'm part of this change to move forward with making things more electronic,” adds Irvin. “We take our jobs very seriously and this work is a reflection of that.”



Irvin



Peddicord

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inSchool

Holiday Games And Competitions For Phifer Staff



Who said teachers can't have fun? Phifer teachers were challenged as they completed crossword puzzles and cryptograms to wrap up their professional development days!

Phifer's In-House Christmas Band



Phifer's staff sang Christmas carols to the students to brighten the holidays!

Collecting Donations For MLK Day Of Service

In observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, members of PEA Pride spent a chilly afternoon at Pennsauken High School, collecting donations of "Blessing Bags" for Angels in Motion, the non-profit helping those battling addiction in the Philadelphia area. These bags contained food, snacks, clothing, hygiene products and resource information to obtain help. One hundred and fifty bags were donated to this worthy cause!

The PEA Pride MLK Day of Service event is one of many events that the Pennsauken Education Association promotes to encourage kindness, positivity, and gratitude in our school community. The Pennsauken Education Association is an affiliate of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) and represents the teachers, nurses, librarians, guidance counselors, child study team members, and student assistance coordinators of the Pennsauken School District. The Penn-



Members of PEA Pride and the Pennsauken community donated 150 "Blessing Bags" for the non-profit Angels in Motion

sauken Pride chapter is an ongoing campaign created to share the education successes of the Pennsauken School District

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Celebrating Culture And Heritage At Phifer



Phifer's sixth grade students got into the spirit and dressed up for school heritage/culture day. Students took pride in wearing traditional garb representing their heritage.

The Grinch Visits Franklin



Laughter filled up all Franklin's halls, when former student Tristan Jones stopped by for a call. He came dressed up in a Grinchy disguise, and our children were excited and full of surprise!

Fine's "Mr. Tom" Turns Seventy

On Jan. 3, Mr. Tom Fink, the daytime maintenance employee at Fine School, turned 70 years young!

Mr. Tom started with the Pennsauken District in 2001 and worked at Benjamin Franklin Elementary until 2006, when he was transferred to George B. Fine School. He has been a reliable, caring part of our school community ever since.

Before coming to our district, Mr. Tom was a 20-year worker at a machine shop that rehabilitated printing press cylinders. Looking back, he is quite happy that the shop closed down, leading him to a new career.

"I'm very lucky to have found a great career with the Board of Education here at Pennsauken," said Fink. "It's great to

be around kids too."

Around each holiday, Mr. Tom wears funny hats, sweaters, or masks to make the students laugh in the morning.

"I like to see them smile and have some fun before they work hard all day."

Despite turning 70, Mr. Tom moves around the building like someone half his age, and he is almost never absent. He travels to each room in the morning, gathering breakfast remains, cleaning spills, sanitizing areas, and maintaining a very organized lunchroom, among other responsibilities. Fine School couldn't function properly without Mr. Tom Fink each day, and we are proud to call him our own.

Happy Birthday Mr. Tom and here's to many more!



For every holiday, Mr. Tom dresses up to make the students smile.



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Holiday Engineering At Delair



Team First Grade at Delair did some engineering during the holidays. Students used graham crackers, icing, and pretzel sticks to build and design houses. Their final products were durable and delicious!

A Message About The Recent Bond Referendum

By Dr. Ronnie Tarchichi, MEd², M.S., M.B.S., M.A.², Ed.D., Ph.D., Superintendent, Pennsauken Public Schools; and the Pennsauken Board of Education: Nick Perry, President; JoAnn Young, Vice President; Lisa Eckel; Michael Hurley; Maria James; Diane Johnson; Samer John Jarboub-Rafeh; Scott La Vine; and Orlando Viera

We thank all the members of the Pennsauken community who came out and participated in December's Bond Referendum Vote. For the past few months, Dr. Tarchichi and members of our Board have had many positive conversations with our school families about the projects we had planned. We were all excited about what this would mean for our school children for years to come. Unfortunately, both proposals failed to pass, with the first question missing by a very narrow margin.

The district is obviously disappointed in the results. Without the referendum, we are forced to make some difficult decisions moving forward. Projects like new Pre-K classrooms, air conditioning throughout our middle school, the magnet high school, and other improvements to our facilities will have to take the back burner. There is only so much that can be done through our capital budget. We must be mindful of our financial responsibilities to our stakeholders. That was why we were hopeful that the bond referendum would pass, so that sweeping changes could be more easily made throughout the Pennsauken School District. Please keep in mind that if the bond referendum had passed, Pennsauken High School would have allowed students to be in the magnet high school and

simultaneously be part of any career and technical education program they chose. That type of program does not exist in the State of New Jersey, and it would have brought a very positive light to our high school and school district in both vocational and comprehensive education.

We respect the wishes of the Pennsauken community and will continue to look at new ways to enhance Pennsauken Public Schools, providing strong and diverse educational opportunities for our students. There are still things that we will be able to set in motion. One of the most significant is our agreement with Puratos Corporation to establish a baking school at Pennsauken High School. This is a one-of-a-kind opportunity where students will have international job options in the baking industry.

In addition, Pennsauken High School will be creating a Fashion and Design program beginning September of 2022. We also remain focused on our other career and technical education (CTE) programs, as well as our academies and dual-credit courses through Rowan University Main Campus, Rowan College at Burlington County (RCBC), and Camden County College (CCC).

Pennsauken Public Schools will continue doing our best for students to ensure learning opportunities and educational experiences in and out of the classroom. We are in this together as a community, and it is our responsibility to create these wonderful opportunities for our children. Everyone in our district wants our students to see that opportunity will meet their potential once

they step foot in Pennsauken Public Schools.

Our school district is offering intramural athletics for the winter in the sports of basketball and wrestling, and it has been very successful. In the spring, we will add intramural track, as well as create additional athletic, music, and art opportunities for students. We care about our students, parents, and community and show it through what we have added to the district in the last five years. We want to continue to grow, as education cannot remain stagnant.

As we continue to move forward in a new year, we thank our dedicated staff, our committed school families, and our eager students, for taking an active part in the success of Pennsauken Public Schools.

Board Holds Reorganization Meeting



At the reorganization meeting of the Pennsauken Board of Education on Jan. 6, Diane Johnson, Samer Jarboub-Rafeh, and Scott La Vine were sworn in after winning re-election in November. The Board is excited to start a new year of serving the Pennsauken school community!

Getting Into The Holiday Spirit At Phifer Concert



Phifer's holiday concert was a huge success under the direction of Ms. Conklin! Students sang wonderful tunes which got everyone into the Christmas spirit!

Helping Families During The Holidays

Each year, Phifer staff hold a special holiday drive to help families in need. Through their generosity, those who would have normally gone without received coats, clothes, shoes, food, grocery store gift cards, toys, art supplies, and more, just in time for Christmas!



Fine Students Become "Principal For The Day"

Fine students could cash in their Classroom Dojo points for different activities with various teachers as a reward for good character and behavior. One activity, which cost the most points, was to be "Principal for the Day" with Mr. Honeyman.

Six students purchased this activity and were excited to even get dressed up if they wished: Adrian Cruz, Rohani Hosain, Abeeha Zil, Sultan Abed, Brianna Valentanga-Leon, and Gabriel Payne. Because of the large numbers, Mr. Honeyman worked with his new principals for

an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon. They held meetings, visited classrooms, and carried out other administrative tasks with Mr. Honeyman.

All the students enjoyed being seen as a leader!

Several Fine students earned an opportunity to be "Principal for the Day" with Mr. Honeyman.



Delair Kindergartners Board "The Polar Express"



The Delair kindergarten team celebrated Christmas by listening to "The Polar Express" and boarding the "train" in their pajamas! Kindergarten teachers and other staff held up the book, as students listened to the story aboard the "train." The activity was culminated with cookies and milk for all participants!

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Gingerbread Creations At Franklin



First graders at Franklin enjoyed making gingerbread houses. The students planned out their construction and started building! Fun was had by all!

PENNSAUKEN SCHOOL NEWS

For further information about the articles or events published in the Pennsauken School News section of "All Around Pennsauken" please contact:

Nicole Roberts, Editor nicole.roberts@pennsauken.net

Pajama Fundraiser Helps Tornado Victims

Fine faculty and staff organized a fundraiser to help raise money for the Red Cross to assist the families devastated by last year's tornadoes. Each student who brought in at least one dollar was able to wear their pajamas to school on the final day before winter break.

Students had a lot of fun showing off their holiday pajamas or their favorite sleepwear, all while raising money to help others. This effort also coincided with our month-long character trait of showing empathy and generosity.



Fine school held a pajama fundraiser in December to help tornado victims.

Carson Students Love Science

Ms. MacClemmy's second and third grade students used the engineering process to solve a problem for Olaf, the snowman, and his wagon.

Olaf lives on a snowy mountain. His problem was, "How can I stop my wagon from rolling down the hill?"

Each student used the engineering process to come up with a solution to solve the problem. Some of the solutions students suggested were to place a big

rock in front of the wagon; build a snow igloo in front of the wagon; and use rope to tie the wagon to Olaf's house, so the wagon doesn't roll down the mountain.

Many of these solutions were successful when trials were conducted!

Students in Ms. MacClemmy's classes used the engineering process to solve a hypothetical problem.



Carson PTA Holds Virtual Craft Night



Carson School's PTA organized a "DIY" Craft Night for our students. Families picked up supplies and a snack and shared their creations! Thank you to all that participated!

Students Shop At "Penn Bucks" Store

As part of Franklin's ongoing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), students earn "Penn Bucks." Children gain "Penn Bucks" from our staff members for being good friends, being helpful, and many more positive behaviors. Students accumulate these bucks then get to go shopping for fun items like toys, activity books, and more!

Franklin students who earn "Penn Bucks" for positive behavior can spend them on fun items at a special store.



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ROBERT LASZLO, JR.
856-419-8882



TONYA BOYCE
(856)304-0630



CHERYL JOYNER
856-308-5383



JILLIAN M. ORMSBY
856-397-2096



ALFRED DANSBURY
856-236-2050



BRENDA ISAKSON
484-678-6005



TONI M. BERTETT
856-534-5300



RUTH LOWBER
609-332-0007



ANDREW GRANT
609-313-9808



JAMES MORETON
609-685-0953

6591 Rudderow Ave, Pennsauken
2257 Finlaw Ave, Pennsauken
Lot Remington Ave, Pennsauken
511 Delaware Ave, Palmyra
1265 Chase St, Camden
69 S. 27th St, Camden
1238 Browning Street, Camden
531 Randolph St, Camden
3221 Highland Ave, Camden
31 S. 32nd St, Camden
402 Shaver Dr, Florence
910 N 2nd St, Camden
2634 Centre St #C3, Pennsauken
8428 Sheppard Rd, Pennsauken
810 N. Forkland Rd #112, Maple Shade
411 N. Stiles Ave #A10, Maple Shade
631 Biedeman Ave, Camden
411 N. Stiles #B3, Maple Shade
6352 Rogers Ave, Pennsauken
161 Rancocas Rd, Mount Holly
6901 Maple Ave, Pennsauken
6149 Amon Ave, Pennsauken
730 S. Bellview Ave, Cinnaminson
909 Crown Point Rd, Westville
201 Stevens Ct, Camden
1013 Gregorys Way, Voorhees
95 Center Lane, My Laurel

5131 Lexington Ave, Pennsauken
1271 Kenwood Ave, Camden
691 New St, Clayton
108 E Roland Ave, Maple Shade
539 Monmouth St., Gloucester City
6233 Russell Ave, Pennsauken
2252 Horner Ave, Pennsauken
211 Glenwood Ave, Merchantville
8511 Park Ave, Pennsauken
105 Rancocas Ave, Riverside
716 Gregorys Way, Voorhees
694 Tanyard Rd, Woodbury
115 Ashby Ct, Mount Laurel
5318 Lexington Ave, Pennsauken
5021 River Rd, Pennsauken
211 Shisler Cir, Runnemede
3133 Bethel Ave, Pennsauken
540 N. Coles, Maple Shade
360 Crawford Ave, Maple Shade
425 W River Dr, Pennsauken
814 Burk Ct, Ventnor City
2503 43rd St, Pennsauken
1750 43rd St., Pennsauken
37 High St, Maple Shade
3029 Union Ave, Pennsauken
4 Sycamore Dr, Burlington
4752 Oak Ter, Pennsauken

288-B Everly Ct, Mount Laurel
314 Mildred Ave, Maple Shade
7473 Collins Ave, Pennsauken
2 Jefferson Ave, Pennsville
224 S. Boulevard Ave, Maple Shade
8341 Wessex Dr, Pennsauken
1103 Fulton St, Cherry Hill
336 Jackson Rd, Atco
8263 Eden Lane, Pennsauken
521 2nd Ave, Bellmawr
8278 Corbett Rd, Pennsauken
7418 Irving Ave, Pennsauken
3266 N. 48th St, Pennsauken
111 Poplar Ave, Maple Shade
1458 Franklin Ave, West Deptford
126 Woodlawn Ave, Merchantville
7556 Baxter Ave, Pennsauken
3204 Cove Rd, Pennsauken
6528 Park Ave, Pennsauken
6 Embassy Dr, Cherry Hill
211 S Fellowship Rd, Maple Shade
2600 Burning Tree Rd, Pennsauken
2 Surry Dr, Egg Harbor
5522 Wisteria Ave, Pennsauken
3010 Gladwyn Ave, Pennsauken
1171 Old Lake Rd, Newfield
1012 Buckingham Dr, Thorofare

8120 Wyndam Rd, Pennsauken
330 Horrace Ave, Palmyra
2166 Tuckahoe, Rd, Franklinville
115 Maine Ave, Cherry Hill
8269 Eden Ln, Pennsauken
110 Granville Dr, Cherry Hill
8 E Nicholson Rd, Audubon
3465 New Jersey Ct, Pennsauken
44 W. Church St, Blackwood
227 Balfield ter, Cherry Hill
16 Morris St, Merchantville
172 Fern Ave, Collingswood
2 Thrush Way, Medford
115 Westminster, Mount Laurel
917 Denston Rd, Thorofare
4800 Old Egg Harbor Rd, Egg Harbor City
1120 Crane Dr, Cherry Hill
207 Lexington Ave, Merchantville
106 Rye Rd, Cherry Hill
1 Oak Terrace, Merchantville
311 Hadleigh Dr, Cherry Hill
2 Moorfield Ct, Mount Laurel
48 E. 2nd St, Moorestown
36 Ortiz Drive, Pennsauken
40 Turtle Creek, Medford



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COVID-19 Vaccines, Booster Shots Available

continued from page 1

“COVID-19 is still here, and it continues to impact our families and friends,” said Pennsauken Mayor Jessica Rafeh. “With the recent surge of new cases, this is a great opportunity for our residents to get vaccinated or their booster shots close to home.”

This event is also open to anyone who lives, works, or studies in the State of New

Jersey. If individuals have already received their first and second vaccine dose, booster shots are available. If a person is not fully vaccinated, they may receive their first or second dose at this event. Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson vaccines will be available.

For more information and updates, visit Pennsauken’s website at twp.pennsauken.nj.us.

Pennsauken Township Appoints New Animal Control Officer

continued from page 1

business for a decade, serving a variety of municipalities in Burlington County, including Mount Laurel, Pemberton, Moorestown, and Cinnaminson. And while Pennsauken is their first contract in Camden County, the staff already have a familiarity with the Township.

“Our goal as animal control officers is to help people and educate them,” explained NJAC owner Charles Garrity, a Pennsauken native who grew up by Springfield Ave. and is a proud member of Pennsauken High School’s Class of 1985. “We’re animal lovers who want to make a difference. Whether it’s a stray animal or a missing pet, we’re going to be empathetic to residents’ needs.”

New Jersey Animal Control has three full-time staff members and two part-time employees, all of whom are working closely with Sgt. Craig Adair of the Pennsauken Police Department, who serves as the town’s humane law enforcement officer. Throughout the entire

week, three fully equipped vehicles – clearly marked with the NJAC logo and designed to safely transport several animals – will be on call.

“Our biggest vehicle can safely transport up to 10 animals,” said Garrity. “It’s like a rolling shelter.”

Residents will also be able to recognize staffers from New Jersey Animal Control by their company uniforms and friendly demeanor.

“Our employees are New Jersey state-certified animal control officers,” added Garrity.

Pennsauken residents with animal control issues involving domestic animals such as dogs and cats can contact the town’s non-emergency dispatch number at (856) 663-1234. From there, either an

officer from the Pennsauken Township Police Department or a member of New Jersey Animal Control will be brought in to assist. Matters dealing with wildlife, such as raccoons, squirrels, etc., are not part of the contracted service; residents who choose to have NJAC handle these matters are financially responsible for the cost at a discounted rate.

“We’ve already assisted with multiple cases in town, including reuniting lost pets with their owners,” said Garrity. “New Jersey Animal Control looks forward to providing professional services that meets the needs of Pennsauken residents.”

For more information on New Jersey Animal Control, visit NewJersey-AnimalControl.com.

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Pennsauken Sewerage Authority

1250 John Tipton Blvd., Pennsauken, NJ 08110

Phone: (856) 663-5542 • Fax: (856) 663-5718 • 24 Hour Emergency: (856) 662-0686

Important Customer Information

The Pennsauken Sewerage Authority is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sanitary sewage collection system in our service area. The sanitary sewage collection system is made up of main lines, force mains and pumping stations.

The homeowner owns and therefore is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the lateral line from their dwelling up to and including the connection to the main line.

The rules and regulations of the Pennsauken Sewerage Authority require a

back flow prevention device commonly referred to as a “back check valve” be installed whenever plumbing fixtures are located below street level, such as in the basement. PSA strongly recommends all our customers have a back check valve installed to prevent contamination in the event of a main line stoppage.

The discharge of water collected in a sump pit to the sanitary sewage collection system is prohibited.

Cooking grease poured down the drain can cause a blockage of the lateral line. Please dispose of grease properly.

Think Twice About What You’re Flushing

Baby wipes, disinfectant wipes, paper towels, and even “flushable” wipes, can’t go down the toilet

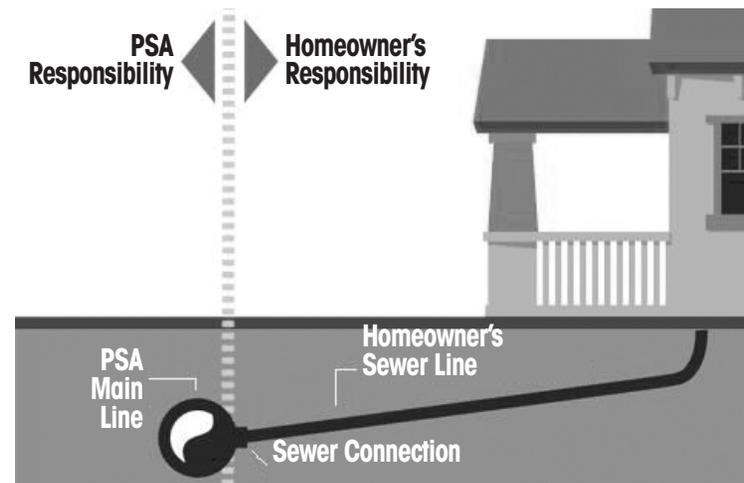
Please do not flush baby wipes, “flushable” wipes, disinfectant wipes or paper towels down the toilet.

The Pennsauken Sewerage Authority is asking residents to think twice about

what they are flushing down their toilets.

Paper towels, tissues, napkins, disinfectant wipes, and supposedly “flushable” wipes should not be flushed down the toilet.

We are seeing an increase in volume,



which is to be expected given the number of people staying in their homes as part of efforts to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The Pennsauken Sewerage Authority

remains available 24 hours a day to assist residents. We will respond to all requests for assistance and will advise the homeowner of our findings by telephone. If you require assistance call (856) 662-0686.

REMINDER: CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR NEXT PAYMENT IS DUE THIS MONTH.

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OFFICE HOURS:
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Friday – 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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WILL NEED YOUR ACCOUNT
ID AND PIN.

LASTLY YOU CAN ALSO MAKE
A PAYMENT USING YOUR
OWN ONLINE BANKING.

If there is a sewer emergency, call the emergency telephone number (856-662-0686) and someone will respond to the call. If you need to contact us for information, you can email customerservice@psewer.com and we will respond in a timely fashion.

If you are having a financial hardship and will be unable to pay your bill on time, or in full, please contact us at (856) 663-5542 to make payment arrangements. A simple 5-minute call could save you the inconvenience of being without water as well as the shut off fee which is currently \$75. Please do not send post dated checks to PSA without prior arrangements.

SENIORCORNER**Camden County Offers Online Support For Caregivers**

By Sonny DiSabato,
Senior Citizen Coordinator

Hello fellow seniors.

“Branching Out to Caregivers” is a caregiver support group that provides resources and health caregiving. Held using Zoom, attendees can log on to learn about caregiver stress, legal concerns, respite programs, adult medical day centers, Alzheimer’s and dementia education, and much more. This event is presented by the Camden County Com-

missioners, the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Senior and Disabled Services, and ADRC.

This month’s online session is on Tuesday, Feb. 15. For more information, visit <https://www.camdencounty.com/event/caregivers-support-group-2/>.

Best wishes for everyone’s continued health. Be sure to say a prayer for our men and women in the armed forces, especially those in harm’s way.

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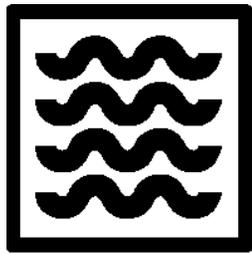
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MPWC WATERLINES

Working To Supply Our Community With The Highest Quality Of Water

By: Richard F. Spafford, PE
Director of Engineering

In uncertain times, you can be sure the Merchantville Pennsauken Water Commission (MPWC) is doing everything in its power to continue to supply the highest quality of water along with the highest quality of services under extreme circumstances.

The issue of safe drinking water did not take a back seat to the pandemic. Over the last few years, new regulations have been implemented to replace water mains at an accelerated rate, to remove all lead and galvanized iron services from the distribution system, and to treat drinking water to higher standards than ever before.

You may have noticed the MPWC digging up the streets, lining and replacing water mains in the area of Franklin School in Pennsauken. In 2021, 7,600 linear feet of water main were either lined with structural epoxy to bring the pipe back to its original condition or replaced entirely. New valves were also installed. While the main was being addressed, temporary water was set up throughout the neighborhood. We did our best to not impact our customers and get in and out of the area as fast as possible.

The State of New Jersey is requiring all lead and galvanized services to be removed over the next ten years. This new law requires that we determine what the customer's material is made out of and



Work is being planned at the water treatment plant on National Highway to meet new state standards.

develop a plan to remove any customer owned galvanized or lead service line. You may have seen our flyers, door hangers or Facebook posts. If you have not already done so, please reach out and let us know if your service line is galvanized iron or copper.

Perhaps the biggest challenge we have faced is the new regulations the state has

PAY YOUR BILL ONLINE

Log onto our website at www.mpwc.com and select the "Pay Your Bill" button right from our homepage.

KEEP INFORMED WITH REVERSE 9-1-1

For members of the community directly affected by water main breaks, we provide messages via our Reverse 9-1-1 notification system. To stay informed of all water emergencies that may occur within our service area, visit MPWC.com/swift911 to sign up for Reverse 9-1-1!

Meetings of the Merchantville-Pennsauken Water Commission are held in person on the second Thursday of every month at 4:00 p.m.

The location is the G. Burton German meeting room at the MPWC's Administrative Headquarters, 6751 Westfield Ave., Pennsauken, NJ 08110. The public is invited to attend. For more information, visit our website, MPWC.com

WATER EMERGENCY?

Call 856-663-0044 anytime, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

implemented to reduce the levels of emerging contaminants in drinking water. Of course, this brings new treatment technology into play, and we are designing and constructing multiple treatment plants to address levels of contaminants down to the low parts per trillion level. With five treatment plants scattered around our towns, this is quite an undertaking and will take a few years to fully implement. Our Woodbine plant is currently off and under construction. Our National Highway plant is running with additional temporary treatment while we permit the permanent treatment plant. Plans are being developed to install additional treatment to the remaining plants as new regulations are implemented. MPWC continues to com-

ply with all regulations even under construction and with the new limits. As you may have seen on the news, not all utilities are doing as well with the new laws.

The good news is this will improve the quality of the drinking water better than it already is. We are constantly looking for outside funding sources to subsidize these capital expenses. With the passage of the new infrastructure bill, funds are being made available to offset some of these additional costs to minimize the burden on you, our customers.

We have increased our water rates by 4 percent this year to assist us with maintaining the high level of service and quality of water and to undertake these large projects. For the average owner-occupied, single-family dwelling, you can an-

ticipate a slight increase in your quarterly water bill of approximately \$2.50 per quarter. Please know that we continue to be committed to providing the highest quality of water at the lowest possible cost. Our operation remains focused on keeping you, and our employees safe, while maximizing the services that we provide.

Moving?



For new tenants and homeowners

Please provide us with your lease agreement or Closing Disclosure/Settlement Statement to establish your account.

If you're moving out...

Please call our office at (856) 663-0043 to schedule a final reading to be done prior to your moving date or settlement. We need your forwarding address or your title company's contact information to know where to send the final bill.

Did You Know...

Ball Valve



Gate Valve

All main shut off valves and interior plumbing within the property are the customer's responsibility to maintain and repair.

High water bill?

The toilet's flapper may be the culprit to cause an "invisible leak".



A toilet is made to fill up as soon as the water in the tank dips low. If the flapper doesn't keep the water in the tank, water is flowing through the meter to increase your bill.

MERCHANTVILLE – PENNSAUKEN WATER COMMISSION
6751 Westfield Avenue, Pennsauken, NJ 08110, 856-663-0043 www.mpwc.com

Mr. Joseph Scavuzzo, President ■ Mr. Shakir Ali, Vice President
Mr. Patrick Brennan, Treasurer ■ Mr. Edward Brennan, Secretary
Mr. Frank Warwick, Asst. Secretary/Treasurer

In the GARDEN Love, And The Smell Of Roses, Are In The Air

By Victoria Rose, AAP Columnist

February is the shortest month of the year and the coldest! It also generally brings the most amount of snow and ice. That reminds me, I think I need to make some hot cocoa bombs.

Speaking of chocolate, February is also the month of love. And what better flower to talk about than the beautiful rose? Whether it's a single rose, a dozen, or roses in a bouquet of multiple flowers, they are amazing! While the red rose is the traditional color of choice for Valentine's Day as a symbol of love, other colors also have unique and significant meanings.

According to goodhousekeeping.com,

the yellow rose is for friendship; a light pink rose means grace and elegance; peach roses means sincerely and gratitude, and the cream ones mean charm and thoughtfulness. Since my favorite color is purple, that is my personal all time, go-to choice. When I married my forever Valentine, my lovely bouquet had purple and white roses, representing romance and purity. And they smelled wonderful!

Some important steps to help keep your roses live longer in a vase are to keep the water fresh and clean; change it regularly. If food came with your flowers, add it to the water. Roses prefer warm water, but make sure you keep them

away from large sources of heat. Also, it's a good idea to recut the stems of each rose diagonally; I have found a small cut up the stem in the center helps as well.

And when your roses are done, that doesn't mean the love ends. Roses can be hung upside down in a dark place to dry out and be saved as a memento.

While Valentine's Day is Feb. 14 each

year, that is not the only day to honor that special someone in your life. Whether it be your love, a friend, parent, child, family relative, neighbor, co-worker, or a special someone, being kind and showing how much you care should be shared 365 days a year. A simple hello, saying good morning, holding a door open, waving, chatting, sending a

note or text, even giving a hug, they all cost nothing. But they do mean everything to the recipient. Kindness is free and should be thrown around like sweet rose petals in the air.

Wishing you all a Happy Valentine's Day! Thank you for taking the time to read my column. Until next time, be kind, be beautiful, and be happy!

CLERKS

OPINION

Application For 2022 Dog & Cat Licenses

By Pam Forman, Acting Township Clerk

Name of Owner _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

Cell No. _____ **Number of Dogs at this address** _____

Dog's Name _____

M/F ___ Dog's Age _____ Breed _____

Length of Dog's Hair (Circle one) SHORT MEDIUM LONG

Color and Markings _____

Altered (Circle one) Yes / No Date _____

Rabies Inoculation Expiration Date _____

Name of Owner _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

Cell No. _____ **Number of Cats at this address** _____

Cat's Name _____

M/F ___ Cat's Age _____ Breed _____

Length of Cat's Hair (Circle one) SHORT MEDIUM LONG

Color and Markings _____

Altered (Circle one) Yes / No Date _____

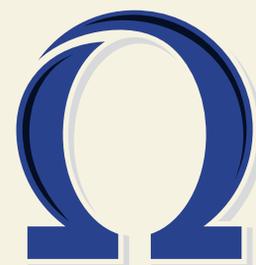
Rabies Inoculation Expiration Date _____

As of the first Monday in February, all dog/cat license renewals are late and a \$10 late fee will be assessed.

FEES: \$12 if the dog/cat has been spayed or neutered (altered)/\$15 if not spayed or neutered (altered). Renew by mail: fill out form and enclose a check or money order for the exact amount made payable to the Township of Pennsauken and mail it to Attn: Twp. Clerk's Office, 5605 N. Crescent Blvd. Pennsauken, NJ 08110. **Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope and copies for proof of rabies inoculation.** Renew in person between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Township Clerk's office. Any questions please call 856-665-1000 x122.

State regulations consider a dog/cat's vaccination valid only if it DOES NOT expire before Nov. 1 of the current year and failure to obtain or renew a dog/cat license could result in a court summons.

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Township Committee Holds 2022 Reorganization, Makes History continued from page 1

Roberts. "I'm so very excited about Pennsauken's future. Pennsauken has so many great things happening. What a privilege it is to serve at such an exciting time."

The members of Township Committee took opportunities that evening to congratulate the pair.

"I've watched Jessica grow as a leader in our community, with the great perspective that she's always given. Nikki, it's been a pleasure to get to know you as a person and I'm honored to work with you every day," said Committeeman Marco DiBattista. "I very much look forward to this year."

"It is a very special night for our new mayor and deputy mayor," continued Committeeman Patrick Olivo. "Township Committee is making Pennsauken history. It will be an honor to work with you both at the helm."

"It's only right that you'd be sworn in on a Latino holiday, 'El Día de Los Reyes' Kids put boxes filled with hay under their beds and get gifts. I thought it was perfect for tonight, because Jess and Nicole are gifts to Pennsauken Township," added Committeeman Vince Martinez.

First elected to Pennsauken Township Committee in 2018, Jessica Rafeh won re-election for a second term in November 2021. As mayor, her responsibilities are focused on administrative, executive, and financial operations within the Township's municipal government. Previously, she had served as deputy mayor in 2021, as well as public safety director. Jessica had also overseen the following committees/departments in her tenure: Economic Development, Planning Board, the Pennsauken Free Public Library, and the Pennsauken Historical Society.

Nicole Roberts was first appointed to Pennsauken Township Committee on December 17, 2020, to fill an open seat. She is the first African American woman to ever serve on the governing body. Deputy Mayor Robert's responsibilities are focused on Building and Property Maintenance, Economic Development, the Pennsauken Free Public Library, and the Pennsauken Township Planning Board.

In addition to the appointment of this year's mayor and deputy mayor, Marco DiBattista was sworn into Township

Committee for a three-year term, and Patrick Olivo was sworn in to finish out the two-year term of an open seat on the governing body.

Looking Back, Working Towards Tomorrow

Marco DiBattista, who served as Pennsauken's mayor for 2021, reflected on a year where Township Committee worked tirelessly in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic to help the community get back to normal.

"The year 2021 started with hope. We were able to get a vaccine, not only into people in Pennsauken but around the world," said Committeeman DiBattista. "It was great to see the numbers drop and lives saved. This was a year that made a difference."

Mr. DiBattista highlighted several major accomplishments from 2021, including the town's COVID-19 vaccination event with CAMcare last April, the dedication of the pickleball courts on River Rd., the grant received for improvements to Tippin's Pond, the awarding of the contract for renovations at the Pennsauken Skate Park, as well as the ongoing plans for a new library/municipal complex.

"The things we were able to do last year were awesome. We worked hard every day for Pennsauken Township. Our goal was: what can we do to make

continued on page 23

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Township Committee Holds 2022 Reorganization continued from page 22

our town a better place? It wasn't just us. We may be the elected officials, but the day-to-day people, the people who work for this Township, put in work every day to make this town the best it could be. I can tell you right now, everybody on Committee and everyone who works for this town is as dedicated as you could possibly be. It's an honor to work next to them.

"I'm proud that in 2021, I had an opportunity to serve our community as the mayor. It was an honor beyond words."

As for plans for the current year, Mayor Rafeh explained that Pennsauken residents would continue to see Township Committee hard at work and encouraged residents to share their thoughts and concerns with their municipal government.

ipal government.

"I believe that actions speak louder than words. So, all I can say is sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride. This 2022 will be an awesome one. I encourage everyone to write, to call, or to simply stop by the municipal building. Pennsauken Township is a dedicated town that has outstanding employees ready to serve you."

AARP Tax-Aide Services Available At Pennsauken Library

continued from page 1

containing all required documents will be available for pick-up at the Library. All tax documents must have been received and all forms filled out prior to arrival for an appointment.

A public computer has been designated in the reference area for individuals to sign up for a tax preparation appointment. If you do not have an email address, no problem! Confirmation forms and intake packets will be available at the at the Library's circulation desk.

If there are no appointments available,

taxpayers can add themselves to the appointment waitlist. An AARP Foundation Tax-Aide will contact waitlisted taxpayers by phone as appointments become available.

Self Preparation

Under this model, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provides taxpayers who have an adjusted gross income of \$73,000 or below with free access to software so they can prepare their own taxes. Taxpayers can also request help from an IRS-certified counselor to coach them through the

process by phone or through computer screen-sharing. Participants can only request virtual tax prep assistance through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide's website: www.aarpfoundation.org/Tax-Aide. Participants must provide a private email address to use this model.

Please do not contact the Pennsauken Library about any of the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service offerings. They are wonderful, supportive hosts, but they are not AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers. The links referenced above have also been shared with the library.

Rafeh, Roberts Recognized By County



Camden County Commissioner Al Dyer presented Pennsauken Mayor Jessica Rafeh and Deputy Mayor Nicole Roberts with proclamations, recognizing the township's historic reorganization in January. Rafeh is the first Hispanic and Middle Eastern person to serve as Pennsauken's mayor, while Nicole Roberts is the town's first African American female deputy mayor.



Visitors always welcomed!
The Bible always opened!

¡Los visitantes siempre son bienvenidos!
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Gospel Meeting - 12noon
Sunday School & Adult Class - 12:30pm
Reunión español - 2:00pm



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6830 S Crescent Blvd. and Marlton Pike

5005 Crescent Blvd. and Browning Road

Lieutenant Kouvatas Retires From Pennsauken Police Department

Pennsauken Police Chief Phil Olivo and the entire Pennsauken Police Department would like to congratulate Lt. Socrates Kouvatas, Badge #164, on his retirement, effective January 1, 2022.

Lt. Kouvatas was hired by the Pennsauken Police Department on July 24, 2000. He was promoted to sergeant in 2007 and lieutenant in 2020, making him one of the Pennsauken Police Department's longest serving supervisors. He is also a fully-licensed paramedic.

Lt. Socrates Kouvatas has faithfully served the residents of Pennsauken for 21 years. We thank you for your dedication to law enforcement and protecting the residents of Pennsauken Township. We wish you the best in all your future endeavors.



Congratulations to Lt. Socrates Kouvatas, who has retired from the Pennsauken Township Police Department after serving the community for 21 years.

Police Looking To Hire Special Law Enforcement Officer

The Pennsauken Township Police Department is currently seeking motivated individuals for the position of Special Law Enforcement Officer Class I (SLEO I). This position is for fulltime employment (40 hours a week) and you must be willing to work shift work. The duties of a SLEO I position include, but are not limited to, communicating with the public, report writing, clerical duties, security, and cell block management.

The Pennsauken Police are looking for individuals with the following skills/qualities:

- Integrity
- Customer Service
- Communication
- Dependability
- Problem Solving
- Report Writing/ Grammar
- Willingness to Learn

Applicant Requirements

- Must be at least 18 years old
- Must be resident of Pennsauken Township
- Must have a valid New Jersey driver's license
- Must have a high school diploma or GED
- Must pass a background investigation
- Must pass a panel interview
- Must pass a medical examination
- Must pass a psychological evaluation
- Must pass a drug test

This is a unique opportunity to join an exceptional law enforcement agency at the ground level and serve the members of your community. If you think this job is right for you, contact Lieutenant Vito Moles at (856)488-0080 ext. 2017 or vmoles@pennsaukenpolice.org. This position will be filled soon, so act now!

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Man Arrested, Charged In Fatal Shooting

A man wanted in the fatal shooting of a Pennsauken woman on Jan. 9 has been apprehended, announced Camden County Prosecutor Grace C. MacAulay and Pennsauken Police Chief Philip Olivo.

Joshua Johnson, 18, of Camden was captured in Newark, N.J. on Jan. 12 by the U.S. Marshals Regional Task Force. He

has been charged with First Degree Murder and other offenses in the death of 62-year-old Darlene Randall in Pennsauken Sunday morning.

Officers responded to the 3700 block of Herbert Avenue at approximately 1:52 a.m. for reports of a home invasion. Upon arrival, they located the victim suffering from a gunshot wound. She succumbed to her injuries a short time later

at the hospital.

Johnson was transferred to Camden County where he was processed on the above charges and remanded to the Camden County Correctional Facility pending a detention hearing before the Court.

All persons charged with criminal offenses are presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.



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QMA Hiring Policy Regarding COVID-19

QMA provides vital and innovative daily living services to people with developmental disabilities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We have remained open during the COVID-19 pandemic and are HIRING continuously. The people we serve need staff who are compassionate and supportive like YOU! Thank you for your interest in joining our team! We invite you to review our current job openings and apply online at our website: qmainc.com

QMA is offering immediate positions for Resident Counselors (RC)

QMA's Resident Counselors are responsible for performing tasks that are essential to helping adults with Intellectual/developmental disabilities lead safe and satisfying lives. They assist the people we serve with daily living activities including personal goals, recreation and daily household living. They facilitate proper medical care and meet the physical, emotional and personal needs of the people we serve. Looking for RC's for Camden, Burlington and Cumberland County.

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We accept walk-in applications M-F between 9 AM - 3 PM to fill out an application. Also you can call Danielle Hollis @ 856-735-1015, or email resume to jpera@qmainc.com
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REQUIREMENTS: Minimum HS diploma or GED
21yrs or older / Valid driver's license

FOODADVENTURES Celebrating The Food Of Love For February 14

By Rachael Shugars, AAP Columnist

My birthday falls on the biggest “lovers” holiday of the year. In celebration of this wonderful holiday (Valentine's Day, not my birthday) I'm going to drop some knowledge for my readers of the foods of love, aphrodisiacs. The

word itself resonates with anyone slightly familiar with the Greek goddess of love herself, Aphrodite. She embodied anything related to love, lust, beauty, pleasure, passion, and procreation; she's the perfect gal to have representing the foods I'll be mentioning.

I suppose anything can be an aphrodisiac for the right person, but there are a specific group of foods that will stir the soul and ruffle up any well-intentioned individual. The following is a hand-picked selection of some of my favorites.

I'll start with the sweeter senses and

mention strawberries, figs, honey, beets, chocolate, and pomegranates. Pomegranates even don another name at times, the “Love Apple.” It's believed that the pomegranate was actually what the Bible's Eve picked from the tree and fed to Adam as the original sin. I'll argue however that pomegranates and every other food I just listed are utterly heavenly on the palate. I would bet that any of the sweets I listed have been tried by some of my readers. Recipes for these ingredients also span over hundreds of years. Figs, for example, were made into jams, cakes, pies, stews, etc.

On the savory side, there are avocados, oysters, olive oil, and truffles. I'll admit, the thought of eating an oyster isn't something I prefer, but it's widely known for its love enhancing properties. Truffles are one of my absolute favorite things to accompany a dish. Who would have thought that fungus was such an enchanting item of love? Truffles can be found everywhere in the world. In America, places like Washington and Oregon are the truest truffle destination spots. Truffle can fetch a hefty price as well, with some auctioning for over \$300,000!

Now for my next favorite part. The WHY factor. Why do people react a certain way after consuming these foods? It's all about the amino acids and nutrients in these foods. First, we have the

happy guy, betaine. This trimethylglycine (Tri-meth-il-gli-seen) not only makes you feel good, but it's also been known to fight hearth disease, promote muscle gain and fat loss, and has anti-inflammatory effects. This is the short list. The more well-known amino acid is tryptophan. This is the stuff in turkey that makes you feel relaxed enough to take a nice nap after eating a huge turkey dinner. Tryptophan is also a feel good amino. Last is boron, the Casanova, the siren, the seductress element of these love foods. This trace mineral is responsible for getting the engine started but is not the last contributor. Vitamin E, antioxidants, potassium, even COFFEE, all create many variations of that loving feeling.

I can't say whether a person should believe in the effects of aphrodisiacs or not. The histories behind each of the foods I listed and dozens more have existed since recorded time began. What I can say for sure is that love producing food or not, I enjoy these foods items, as well as trying new dishes as I go. After all, the act of cooking itself is an act of love, isn't it? Eres amodo. Ban được yêu. Jestseš kochany. Du wirst geliebt. तुमप्यार कर रहे हैं. Vous êtes aimé. You are loved. Enjoy you Food Adventures!

Make sure to join my Facebook page, “AAP Food Adventures,” and my Instagram @AAPFoodAdventures, to share pics of the food you love!



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FRIENDS of the LIBRARY More Events From The Friends Of The Library

By Arlene Miller, Friends of the Pennsauken Free Public Library

Munch and a Movie meets again this month on Tuesday, Feb. 15 from 1:00 p.m. 'till the movie is over. Bring whatever you like for lunch; we'll supply snacks and a beverage, and everyone gets to enjoy the first-rate movie our planners have picked out. Masks will be required while you're not eating, and of course we'll maintain safe distances.

You can get advance notice of what movie we'll be showing if you call the library's circulation desk before the 15th to see what's in store. Or be surprised. That's fun too!

Let's hope you managed to take advantage of the in-person chair yoga sessions that started last month in the library's community room, but whether you did or didn't, there are more going on Feb. 4, 11, and 18, and even more in March that we'll tell you about next month. The one-hour sessions begin at 10:30 a.m. Since attendance will be limited to 20 in-person attendees, there will also be the opportunity for hybrid virtual participation via Zoom with unlimited participation. Our favorite wellness instructor, Michele Carlino, conducts the sessions.

If you want the option to attend in person, either stop by the library's circu-

lation desk to register or call (856) 665-9595, ext. 3 to sign up. Once we register the maximum number of in-person participants, you can request to be on the waiting list. Everyone who registers to participate in person will also be registered in Zoom, so you'll have the option to attend virtually any time. If you're Zooming the sessions, here's the link: <https://tinyurl.com/FOLYOGA>.

While you're at it, it's not too early to start thinking about what original cre-

ation you'll be submitting for our Art Show and Sale that runs April 25 - 30. It's our first show in two years, and we want to make it special! Brochures are now available at the front desk in the library explaining everything you need to know about the show, from what media are acceptable to size to how to register, you name it. Residents from Pennsauken and Merchantville from eighth grade to adults are eligible to enter.

Meanwhile, with all this frigid weather

taking over, it's hard to believe we'll ever be warm enough again to attend an outdoor event, but our fundraiser is still in the works for June 5, a silent art auction and wine tasting event taking place at the beautiful Strain Estate, known locally as Inglesby & Sons on Cove Rd. Save the date!

There are lots of activities to look forward to, so check here for more details as they're finalized. For now, stay warm and safe!

Friends Of The Library Art Show Returns In April

Calling all local area artists! After a two-year interruption, the Friends of the Pennsauken Library are planning to host their annual Art Show and Sale this coming spring. Local artists are encouraged to display their original works in various media during the event, which runs from Monday, April 25, to Saturday, April 30 and held in the magazine section of the Pennsauken Free Public Library. Participants must be Pennsauken or Merchantville residents from eighth grade through adult. Notices have been sent to all public and private schools in Pennsauken. Details for participation are noted in a flyer now available at the library circulation desk.

Attendees at the spring fundraiser will be able to vote for their favorite art piece in the "People's Choice Award." All in-

terested artists are asked to send an email with a photo of your work to Eleanor Gribok, co-chair, at egribok@comcast.net. Please include your telephone number in your message.

Additionally, there will be a second opportunity to display your original art pieces (paintings, watercolor, photographs, etc.) as part of a Silent Art Auction and Wine Tasting event hosted by Inglesby & Sons Funeral Home, 2426 Cove Rd., held on Sunday, June 5. For this event, artwork must be framed and

ready to hang.

All participating artists must agree to donate 20 percent of the sale price of any piece they sell at either event to the Friends of the Pennsauken Free Public Library. These Funds will be used to support our new STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts and Math.) initiative to provide funds to the Pennsauken Free Public Library towards their collection of new opportunities for learning.

PHS Alumni Luncheon Held On February 16

The monthly Pennsauken High School Alumni Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 16, 1:00 p.m., at Marco's Restaurant at the Pennsauken Country Club, 3800 Haddonfield Rd. Reservations are required as space is limited. Call Norma at (856) 220-5597 to reserve a space or for any questions.



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GRAYMATTERS The Shortest Month, But With Plenty Of Special Days

By Judith Kristen,
AAP Columnist

Ah, February! Other than April, my annual 18th birthday month, February has always had my heart.

It was the month I first cut school to go to Kennedy airport to see The Beatles arrive in America in 1964. And it was the first televised American performance of them on The Ed Sullivan Show on February 9, 1964.

It's also Valentine's Day month. It's Groundhog Day, the actual animal, and the movie.

May I tell you that Feb. 2 is also

"Dump Your Significant Jerk Day?" Personally, I think if there's a genuine jerk in your life, dumping him should not be limited to only one day in the month of February. I mean, seriously!

Also, Feb. 5 brings us to "Working Naked Day," followed by "Ice Cream for Breakfast Day" on the 6th. I suppose you could combine those two days, at least you'd have ice cream for breakfast and – note to self – a great story to tell before the cops came to tow you away from the office.

Let's not forget that Mardi Gras starts in February. And if you've never been to New Orleans for Mardi Gras, put it on

your bucket list right now. It is worth it for the fun memories you'll carry forward for the rest of your life. And one of my all-time favorite days of the month is Random Acts of Kindness Day on Feb. 17. If you can be anything in this world, be kind.

Now, back to The Beatles on Feb. 25 for it is George Harrison's Birthday, and also my first grandchild's birthday. Yes, Krissy was born on George Harrison's Birthday! And when she was due on Feb. 3, I was positive that the baby would be born on the 25th. And I got laughed at, and got the "Oh, Mom!" thing and the eyerolls, but... it was so nonetheless. My

Beatle magic weaves its way throughout all of my life. That's my story and I'm stickin' to it.

However, for you more conventional candy and cards on Valentine's Day folk, here are some beautiful quotes that will forever ring true to the lovebirds of February:

"Every heart sings a song, incomplete, until another heart whispers back." – Plato

"Never love anyone who treats you like you're ordinary." – Oscar Wilde

"Time is too slow for those who wait,

too swift for those who fear, too long for those who grieve, too short for those who rejoice. But for those who love, time is not." – Henry Van Dyke

So there it is, February. And however you choose to embrace this month, I hope some love sneaks up on you in beautiful surprise. Those are always the loveliest times of all.

Happy February one and all. Now I'm going out to buy some ice cream.

Peace and love and all good things.
Your friend,
~Judy



PennsaukenTown Watch Meets On February 9

PENNSAUKEN'S TOWN WATCH hosts its meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, 7:00 p.m., at the second floor of the Pennsauken Township Police Department, 2400 Bethel Ave. This month's meeting is held on Feb. 9. Come learn how to keep your community safe!

For more information, visit the "Pennsauken Town Watch" Facebook Group.

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Evenings & Sunday by appointment



Will you please help us to help the pups?



One of our funeral directors, Andrea Meyers (left), is heading to Georgia this month with Animal Aid USA to bring home some fur babies! They will be traveling to Murray County, one of their rescue partners in Georgia! We'd love to load up their rescue van with donations to help the volunteers that work tirelessly every single day to care for the dogs and puppies until they are brought to Woof Love Rescue and other local dog rescues.

There will be a drop box located at the side door of our Pennsauken funeral home located at 6600 N. Browning Road for any in person donations. Below is a list of items they are collecting:

- Puppy pads – Dry and wet dog food – Canned puppy food – Dog treats
- Bleach, detergent, and fabric softener – Naturally Fresh cat litter
- Paper towels – PineSol, OdoBan – Large cleaning buckets with handles

THANK YOU so much for helping them to get these babies what they need!

*Not all people pictured are licensed & qualified to make funeral arrangements, embalm or conduct funerals.



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Virtual Events

- Animal Crossing Open Play (All Ages) – Monday, Feb. 7; 5:00 p.m. The Isle of PL welcomes players of all ages! To visit add PFPL's Nintendo Friend Code, SW-3902-1262-4235, visit your ACNH airport, and select "online play" to find us. Nintendo Online subscription required for online play.
- FOL Chair Yoga (Adults) – Fridays, Feb. 4, 11, & 18; 10:30 a.m. The Friends of the Pennsauken Library invite you to join us for Chair Yoga. The classes will be held virtually in Zoom, with unlimited capacity. Registration required. Register online for virtual attendance: <https://tinyurl.com/FOLYOGA>.
- Preschool Storytime (Ages 3-5) – Tuesdays, Feb. 1, 8, 15, & 22; 11:00 a.m. Join Ms Susan and Ms Sabrina for storytime

fun! Storytime combines reading with music, dancing, multilingual skills, finger-plays, and rhymes. Registration required. <https://tinyurl.com/pfplstory22>.

- SparkJoy® Tidying Up Workshop (Adults) – Wednesday, Feb. 9; 7:00 p.m. Learn to declutter and organize your space with Shannon Huneycutt, certified Silver level KonMari® Consultant and of founder of SparkJoy® Charlotte. Registration required. <https://tinyurl.com/sparkjoy>.
- Pajama Storytime Celebrating Black History Month – Thursday, Feb. 17; 6:00 p.m. Cozy up in your pajamas and grab your favorite stuffed animal; join PFPL's Youth Services for a special night-time storytime! Registration required. <https://tinyurl.com/pfplPJS22>.
- Black History Trivia (Teens & Adults) – Friday, Feb. 18; 6:30 p.m. Join us for a fun evening testing your knowledge and celebrating the contributions of notable Black Americans! To be a contestant,

registration is required at <https://tinyurl.com/pfplbhmtrivia>. To join in the fun as a viewer, we'll be streaming the virtual Trivia Night live on Facebook.

- Unearthing the Civil War and the History of Black Cemeteries – Thursday, Feb. 24; 6:30 p.m. Shamele Jordon will talk about how her passion for genealogy led to a deeper understanding of African American participation in the Civil War and the historical importance of African American cemeteries. She will also share her work with Lawnside Middle School students, and how they used genealogy and technology to bring new awareness to more than 100 Civil War veterans buried in Lawnside, NJ. To register, visit tinyurl.com/pfplbh22.

In-Person Events

- Blind Date with a Book (Adults) – Throughout February, stop by the library to pick up a mystery book wrapped in brown paper. You might just fall in love with a new author or series!
- Basic Computer Skills (Adults) – Tuesdays, Feb. 1, 8, & 22; 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Learn basic computer skills, including using the internet and setting up an email account in this 6-week course. Participants will also be introduced to Microsoft Office. Registration required. Please call

the library or register online: <https://tinyurl.com/pfplclasses>.

- Take & Make Tuesdays (Children & Families) – Tuesdays, Feb. 8 & 22. Stop by our Youth Services Department for free crafts that you can take with you and make at home! Crafts will be updated on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month and will be available while supplies last during the library's regular open hours.
- Access Navigator Program – Our Access Navigator, Jeff Bolmeyer, will be available in the library on Tuesdays between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to meet one-on-one with patrons to help them define, track, and achieve their goals. Jeff can help with computer skills, resume build-

ing, job searching and more.

- AARP Tax-Aide Program – The AARP Tax-Aide Program will be held in the Community Room on Wednesdays and Thursdays, beginning Feb. 2. For more details, visit the article on the front cover.

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Sunday: CLOSED

The Pennsauken Free Public Library will be closed on Monday, Feb. 21 in observance of Presidents' Day.

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CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

inSports Walker To Attend Sacred Heart University, Join Women's Wrestling Program

By Frank Sinatra, AAP Editor

Next fall, PHS senior Tatiana Walker will be a Pioneer. The regional champion currently ranked fifth in the state recently signed her letter of intent to attend Sacred Heart University in Connecticut and join their brand-new women's wrestling program.

"I instantly fell in love with the campus. Everything I was looking for in a college just popped out to me there," explained Tatiana, the All American who currently has an 8-3 record this season. "Not to mention, they're just starting out a women's wrestling program and I want to be the first there. I love being a part of history. It's a big part of what drew me to

the college."

"It's a highlight of any athletic director to see one of your student-athletes continue their career at the next level with both an academic and sports scholarship," said Billy Snyder, athletic director for Pennsauken Public Schools. "Sacred Heart is getting a champion. We're really excited and proud of her."

"We're very proud. [College] was always the goal," added William Walker, Tatiana's father. "We've always pushed her, and she's always excelled."

"She worked hard for this," continued Miriam Walker, Tatiana's stepmother. "Whether it was a good day or a bad day, we encouraged her and knew she



PHS Senior Tatiana Walker signed her letter of intent to Sacred Heart University to wrestle and study criminal justice.

could do it."

Tatiana will be studying criminal justice with a minor in psychology at Sacred Heart University and will bring the same never-say-die mentality to both the classroom and the wrestling mat.

"I do everything with my heart. I'm a hard worker on and off the mat," explains Tatiana. "Even if I'm having a bad day, I get back on my feet and persevere through everything."

Congratulations Tatiana and best wishes for much future success!

Phifer Wrestling Takes On Cinnaminson



Phifer's wrestlers were hard at work to earn a win against Cinnaminson Middle School.

LOOKING FOR ONLINE CONTENT YOU CAN'T FIND ANYWHERE ELSE? Visit AllAroundPennsauken.com

Intramural Soccer Registration Continues This Month



Sponsored by the Pennsauken Youth Soccer Club, the intramural program is co-ed and open to children living in Pennsauken and Merchantville. Players are divided into teams by age group. Practices are typically an hour long, one night a week between Monday and Thursday. All intramural games are played on Friday night under the lights at our Pennsauken Soccer Complex at Westfield and Bethel avenues.

Early online registration for intramural soccer runs through Feb. 22. After this date, a \$15 late fee will be added.

To sign up a child, visit PennsaukenSoccer.com. For more information, email pennsaukenyouthsoccerclub@gmail.com.

Boys Indoor Track Wins State Title



Congratulations to the Boys Indoor Track Team on winning the Relay Indoor State Track and Field Team Title. The team competed in nine different relay events to earn the championship!

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